Remarks

The Office Action mailed October 17, 2005 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1-44 are now pending in this application. Claims 1-44 stand rejected. Claims 1, 3, 4, 13, 14, 18, 23, and 30-34 have been amended herein. Claim 2 has been canceled herein. Upon entry of this Amendment, Claims 1 and 3-44 will be pending in this application.

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a), a three-month extension of time is submitted herewith to extend the due date of the response to the Office Action dated October 17, 2005, for the above-identified patent application from January 17, 2006, through and including April 17, 2006. In accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.17(a)(3), authorization to charge a deposit account in the amount of $1,020.00 to cover this extension of time request also is submitted herewith.

The rejection of Claims 1 and 3-44 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,691,159 (Grewal '159) is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that Grewal '159 does not describe nor suggest the claimed invention. As discussed below, at least one of the differences between Grewal '159 and the present invention is that Grewal '159 does not describe nor suggest storing expert information within a database including a pool of experts and information describing each expert included within the pool of experts, *the expert information organized within the database in a plurality of business-related communities including at least one of information technology, finance, manufacturing, engineering, risk management, quality, human resources, environmental, health and safety, legal, and operations*, displaying information on the client system identifying alternative paths for assistance to a user, *wherein the displayed information comprises the plurality of business-related communities*, and displaying expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, *wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user.* (Emphasis added).

Moreover, at least one other difference between Grewal '159 and the present invention is that Grewal '159 does not describe nor suggest cross-referencing information describing a user with expert information stored within a database, *wherein cross-referencing comprises comparing the information describing the user including at least one of a location of the user, a sub-business of the user, a business of the user, and a communication language of the user to the expert information stored within the database including identification of expert, type of expert, location of expert, sub-business of expert, business of expert, schedule of expert, shift timings of expert, communication language of expert, and availability of expert*, and displaying expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, *wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user.* (Emphasis added).

Grewal '159 describes a web-based method and system for providing assistance to computer users. The system provides an integrated approach to providing users of the computer system with education, information and computer assisted help on a specific subject, problem or a project. The system further offers flexibility in providing direct human interaction by linking a group of experts through a web site. For a specific subject, the system provides two distinct paths to the user, an Education Path and an Expert Assistance Path. The system further provides the user an opportunity to contact an expert through direct e-mail link, or to chat on-line with an expert and to obtain phone call assistance at the user's request.

Claim 1 recites a method for providing expert information from a pool of experts using a server system coupled to a centralized database and at least one client system, wherein the method comprises, among other things, "storing expert information within the database including a pool of experts and information describing each expert included within the pool of experts, the expert information organized within the database in a plurality of business-related communities including at least one of information technology, finance, manufacturing, engineering, risk management, quality, human resources, environmental, health and safety, legal, and operations...displaying information on the client system identifying alternative paths for assistance to a user, wherein the displayed information comprises the plurality of business-

related communities...displaying expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user...."

Grewal '159 does not describe nor suggest a method as recited in Claim 1. For example, Grewal '159 does not describe nor suggest a method including storing expert information within a database including a pool of experts and information describing each expert included within the pool of experts, *the expert information organized within the database in a plurality of business-related communities including at least one of information technology, finance, manufacturing, engineering, risk management, quality, human resources, environmental, health and safety, legal, and operations*, displaying information on the client system identifying alternative paths for assistance to a user, *wherein the displayed information comprises the plurality of business-related communities*, and displaying expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, *wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user*. (Emphasis added).

Grewal '159 describes a web-based method and system that links a group of experts through a web site, provides an Education Path and an Expert Assistance Path to a user, and provides the user an opportunity to contact an expert through direct e-mail link, to chat on-line with an expert, and to obtain phone call assistance at the user's request. However, Grewal '159 does not describe nor suggest storing expert information within a database including a pool of experts and information describing each expert included within the pool of experts, the expert information organized within the database in a plurality of business-related communities including at least one of information technology, finance, manufacturing, engineering, risk management, quality, human resources, environmental, health and safety, legal, and operations, displaying information on the client system identifying alternative paths for assistance to a user, wherein the displayed information comprises the plurality of business-related communities, and displaying expert information including expert availability information on the client system

through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user.

Accordingly, and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1 is patentable over Grewal '159.

Claims 3-17 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 3-17 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 3-17, for at least this reason, are likewise patentable over Grewal '159.

Claim 18 recites a system for providing expert information from a pool of experts, wherein the system comprises "a client system comprising a browser...a database for storing expert information including a pool of experts and information describing each expert included within the pool of experts...and a server system configured to be coupled to said client system and said database, said server system configured to...display information on the client system identifying alternative paths for assistance to a user...receive a request from the user using the client system including an alternative path selected by the user...access expert information stored within the database based on the alternative path selected by the user...cross-reference information describing the user with the expert information stored within the database, wherein cross-referencing comprises comparing the information describing the user including at least one of a location of the user, a sub-business of the user, a business of the user, and a communication language of the user to the expert information stored within the database including identification of expert, type of expert, location of expert, sub-business of expert, business of expert, schedule of expert, shift timings of expert, communication language of expert, and availability of expert...display expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user...and contact the expert based on user selected expert information inputted into the client system."

Grewal '159 does not describe nor suggest a system as recited in Claim 18. For example, Grewal '159 does not describe nor suggest a system including a server system configured to cross-reference information describing a user with expert information stored within a database, *wherein cross-referencing comprises comparing the information describing the user including at least one of a location of the user, a sub-business of the user, a business of the user, and a communication language of the user to the expert information stored within the database including identification of expert, type of expert, location of expert, sub-business of expert, business of expert, schedule of expert, shift timings of expert, communication language of expert, and availability of expert*, and display expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, *wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user.* (Emphasis added).

Grewal '159 describes a web-based method and system that links a group of experts through a web site, provides an Education Path and an Expert Assistance Path to a user, and provides the user an opportunity to contact an expert through direct e-mail link, to chat on-line with an expert, and to obtain phone call assistance at the user's request. However, Grewal '159 does not describe nor suggest a server system configured to cross-reference information describing a user with expert information stored within a database, wherein cross-referencing comprises comparing the information describing the user including at least one of a location of the user, a sub-business of the user, a business of the user, and a communication language of the user to the expert information stored within the database including identification of expert, type of expert, location of expert, sub-business of expert, business of expert, schedule of expert, shift timings of expert, communication language of expert, and availability of expert, and display expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user.

Accordingly, and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 18 is patentable over Grewal '159.

Claims 19-44 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 18. When the recitations of Claims 19-44 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 18, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 19-44, for at least this reason, are likewise patentable over Grewal '159.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully requests that the Section 102(e) rejection of Claims 1 and 3-44 as being anticipated by Grewal '159 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 1 and 3-44 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,862,223 (Walker) is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that Walker does not describe nor suggest the claimed invention. As discussed below, at least one of the differences between Walker and the present invention is that Walker does not describe nor suggest storing expert information within a database including a pool of experts and information describing each expert included within the pool of experts, *the expert information organized within the database in a plurality of business-related communities including at least one of information technology, finance, manufacturing, engineering, risk management, quality, human resources, environmental, health and safety, legal, and operations*, displaying information on the client system identifying alternative paths for assistance to a user, *wherein the displayed information comprises the plurality of business-related communities*, and displaying expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, *wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user*. (Emphasis added).

Moreover, at least one other difference between Walker and the present invention is that Walker does not describe nor suggest cross-referencing information describing a user with expert information stored within a database, *wherein cross-referencing comprises comparing the information describing the user including at least one of a location of the user, a sub-business of the user, a business of the user, and a communication language of the user to the expert information stored within the database including identification of expert, type of expert, location*

of expert, sub-business of expert, business of expert, schedule of expert, shift timings of expert, communication language of expert, and availability of expert, and displaying expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, *wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user.* (Emphasis added).

Walker describes an expert matching method and apparatus for managing communications between an expert having particular qualifications and an end user seeking a solution to an expert request. The apparatus includes a controller having a database for storing expert qualifications. In one embodiment, the controller receives an expert request. A search program identifies experts qualified to respond to the expert request. The expert request is then transmitted to the expert, which results in an expert answer transmitted to and received by the central controller. After authentication of the expert answer, using a wide range of security levels from passwords to cryptography, the answer is forwarded to the end user. The method and apparatus of the present invention have applications on the Internet as well as conventional voice telephony systems.

Claim 1 is recited above. Walker does not describe nor suggest a method as recited in Claim 1. For example, Walker does not describe nor suggest a method including storing expert information within a database including a pool of experts and information describing each expert included within the pool of experts, *the expert information organized within the database in a plurality of business-related communities including at least one of information technology, finance, manufacturing, engineering, risk management, quality, human resources, environmental, health and safety, legal, and operations*, displaying information on the client system identifying alternative paths for assistance to a user, *wherein the displayed information comprises the plurality of business-related communities*, and displaying expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, *wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user.* (Emphasis added).

Walker describes an expert matching method and apparatus for managing communications between an expert having particular qualifications and an end user seeking a solution to an expert request. However, Walker does not describe nor suggest storing expert information within a database including a pool of experts and information describing each expert included within the pool of experts, the expert information organized within the database in a plurality of business-related communities including at least one of information technology, finance, manufacturing, engineering, risk management, quality, human resources, environmental, health and safety, legal, and operations, displaying information on the client system identifying alternative paths for assistance to a user, wherein the displayed information comprises the plurality of business-related communities, and displaying expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user.

Accordingly, and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1 is patentable over Walker.

Claims 3-17 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 3-17 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 3-17, for at least this reason, are likewise patentable over Walker.

Claim 18 is recited above. Walker does not describe nor suggest a system as recited in Claim 18. For example, Walker does not describe nor suggest a system including a server system configured to cross-reference information describing a user with expert information stored within a database, *wherein cross-referencing comprises comparing the information describing the user including at least one of a location of the user, a sub-business of the user, a business of the user, and a communication language of the user to the expert information stored within the database including identification of expert, type of expert, location of expert, sub-business of expert, business of expert, schedule of expert, shift timings of expert, communication language of expert, and availability of expert*, and display expert information including expert

availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, *wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user.* (Emphasis added).

Walker describes an expert matching method and apparatus for managing communications between an expert having particular qualifications and an end user seeking a solution to an expert request. However, Walker does not describe nor suggest a server system configured to cross-reference information describing a user with expert information stored within a database, wherein cross-referencing comprises comparing the information describing the user including at least one of a location of the user, a sub-business of the user, a business of the user, and a communication language of the user to the expert information stored within the database including identification of expert, type of expert, location of expert, sub-business of expert, business of expert, schedule of expert, shift timings of expert, communication language of expert, and availability of expert, and display expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user.

Accordingly, and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 18 is patentable over Walker.

Claims 19-44 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 18. When the recitations of Claims 19-44 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 18, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 19-44, for at least this reason, are likewise patentable over Walker.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully requests that the Section 102(e) rejection of Claims 1 and 3-44 as being anticipated by Walker be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 1 and 3-44 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,829,585 (Grewal '585) is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that Grewal '585 does not describe nor suggest the claimed invention. As discussed below, at least one of the differences between Grewal '585 and the present invention is that Grewal '585 does not describe nor suggest storing expert information within a database including a pool of experts and information describing each expert included within the pool of experts, *the expert information organized within the database in a plurality of business-related communities including at least one of information technology, finance, manufacturing, engineering, risk management, quality, human resources, environmental, health and safety, legal, and operations*, displaying information on the client system identifying alternative paths for assistance to a user, *wherein the displayed information comprises the plurality of business-related communities*, and displaying expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, *wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user.* (Emphasis added).

Moreover, at least one other difference between Grewal '585 and the present invention is that Grewal '585 does not describe nor suggest cross-referencing information describing a user with expert information stored within a database, *wherein cross-referencing comprises comparing the information describing the user including at least one of a location of the user, a sub-business of the user, a business of the user, and a communication language of the user to the expert information stored within the database including identification of expert, type of expert, location of expert, sub-business of expert, business of expert, schedule of expert, shift timings of expert, communication language of expert, and availability of expert*, and displaying expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, *wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user.* (Emphasis added).

Grewal '585 describes a web-based method and system for indicating expert availability. The system provides an integrated approach to providing users of the computer system with assisted help on a specific subject, problem or project as well as indicating expert availability and

queue statistics through a graphical applet. The system further offers flexibility in providing direct human interaction by linking a group of experts through a web site. For a specific subject, the system provides two distinct paths to the user, an Education Path and an Expert Assistance Path. The system further provides the user an opportunity to contact an expert through direct e-mail link, or to chat on-line with an expert and to obtain phone call assistance at the user's request.

Claim 1 is recited above. Grewal '585 does not describe nor suggest a method as recited in Claim 1. For example, Grewal '585 does not describe nor suggest a method including storing expert information within a database including a pool of experts and information describing each expert included within the pool of experts, *the expert information organized within the database in a plurality of business-related communities including at least one of information technology, finance, manufacturing, engineering, risk management, quality, human resources, environmental, health and safety, legal, and operations*, displaying information on the client system identifying alternative paths for assistance to a user, *wherein the displayed information comprises the plurality of business-related communities*, and displaying expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, *wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user*. (Emphasis added).

Grewal '585 describes a web-based method and system for indicating expert availability. However, Grewal '585 does not describe nor suggest storing expert information within a database including a pool of experts and information describing each expert included within the pool of experts, the expert information organized within the database in a plurality of business-related communities including at least one of information technology, finance, manufacturing, engineering, risk management, quality, human resources, environmental, health and safety, legal, and operations, displaying information on the client system identifying alternative paths for assistance to a user, wherein the displayed information comprises the plurality of business-related communities, and displaying expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, wherein expert availability information includes whether the

called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user.

Accordingly, and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1 is patentable over Grewal '585.

Claims 3-17 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 3-17 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 3-17, for at least this reason, are likewise patentable over Grewal '585.

Claim 18 is recited above. Grewal '585 does not describe nor suggest a system as recited in Claim 18. For example, Grewal '585 does not describe nor suggest a system including a server system configured to cross-reference information describing a user with expert information stored within a database, *wherein cross-referencing comprises comparing the information describing the user including at least one of a location of the user, a sub-business of the user, a business of the user, and a communication language of the user to the expert information stored within the database including identification of expert, type of expert, location of expert, sub-business of expert, business of expert, schedule of expert, shift timings of expert, communication language of expert, and availability of expert*, and display expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, *wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user.* (Emphasis added).

Grewal '585 describes a web-based method and system for indicating expert availability. However, Grewal '585 does not describe nor suggest a server system configured to cross-reference information describing a user with expert information stored within a database, wherein cross-referencing comprises comparing the information describing the user including at least one of a location of the user, a sub-business of the user, a business of the user, and a communication language of the user to the expert information stored within the database including identification of expert, type of expert, location of expert, sub-business of expert,

business of expert, schedule of expert, shift timings of expert, communication language of expert, and availability of expert, and display expert information including expert availability information on the client system through an applet downloaded from the server system when the user calls upon an expert to seek assistance, wherein expert availability information includes whether the called upon expert is currently in communication with the client system and available to provide assistance to the user.

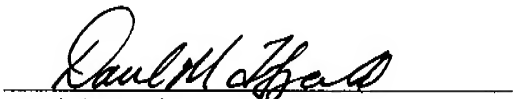
Accordingly, and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 18 is patentable over Grewal '585.

Claims 19-44 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 18. When the recitations of Claims 19-44 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 18, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 19-44, for at least this reason, are likewise patentable over Grewal '585.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully requests that the Section 102(e) rejection of Claims 1 and 3-44 as being anticipated by Grewal '585 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,



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